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Spy for Soviets was worker at U.S. embassy

By Bill Gertz
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The female Soviet agent who seduced a U.S. Marine embassy guard now being held on suspicion of espionage was an employee at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, The Washington Times has learned.

Sources close to the case said the suspect, Sgt. Clayton J. Lonetree, a Marine security guard, had sexual relations with the Soviet national, who worked at the embassy while he served in Moscow between September 1984 and March 1986.

The case may represent one of the most serious breaches of security in the nation's history, said one intelligence source familiar with its details.

U.S. intelligence officials investigating the case suspect that Sgt. Lonetree and his lover collaborated in a scheme to allow KGB spies to enter the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, where they had access to some of the most secret U.S. intelligence, diplomatic data and communications about the Soviet Union.

He also is suspected of helping the KGB plant electronic listening devices and other espionage paraphernalia inside the Moscow and Vienna embassies.

"It doesn't get any worse than that," said one intelligence source.

The seduction was the first step in a recruitment effort by the Soviet KGB intelligence service leading to clandestine meetings between Sgt. Lonetree and KGB officials outside the Moscow embassy, and later in Vienna, Austria, where U.S. officials first learned of the case, sources said.

Sgt. Lonetree confessed after U.S. officials confronted him with evidence of his involvement with the Soviet woman and the KGB, the sources said.

He has not been charged with the offenses, but has been jailed at the Marine base in Quantico, Va., since New Year's Eve.

The female embassy employee was not identified by the sources. But they said she might have been

what is known in intelligence circles as an "access agent" — someone who is not a professional spy but is used as an agent in intelligence missions.

U.S. Embassy personnel in Moscow are given specific instructions to avoid being ensnared by female KGB agents — known as "swallows" — who use sexual entrapment as a recruitment tool, according to intelligence experts.

The Marine Corps has ordered a special administrative probe to begin early next month to determine if Sgt. Lonetree should be charged

with espionage, a spokesman said yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Naval Investigative Service is handling the case, said Marine spokesman Maj. Anthony Rothfork. The FBI has not been called in.

The Justice Department usually allows the military to handle such cases unless civilians are involved.

Maj. Rothfork said Sgt. Lonetree could be charged under the Uniform Code of Military Justice with espionage, conspiracy to commit espionage and failing to report contact with citizens of communist-controlled nations.

He also faces federal espionage charges under laws prohibiting the unauthorized removal and disclosure of classified information.

If convicted of espionage charges by a military court, Sgt. Lonetree could be executed — the maximum penalty granted under Section 106(A) of the military code, Maj. Rothfork said.

Navy Secretary John Lehman last year publicly attacked the Justice Department for its plea bargain arrangement in a major espionage trial. Convicted spy John Walker was sentenced to life imprisonment with the possibility of parole in 10 years after agreeing to cooperate with the understanding that his son, Michael Walker, would be given a more lenient sentence.

However, sources said Walker failed a U.S. government polygraph test prior to his sentencing, indicat-

ing that he gave deceptive answers to questions about statements he made to authorities.

Secretary Lehman charged that the plea bargain deal continued "a tradition in the Justice Department of treating espionage as just another white-collar crime."

In a move to stem spying in U.S. diplomatic facilities in the Soviet

Union, Congress recently pressured the State Department into curbing the use of Soviet nationals in Moscow and Leningrad.

The action came after U.S. officials discovered that typewriters sent to Moscow from the United States had been bugged.

Under a State Department security plan announced last year, no Soviet nationals will be employed in the new embassy building scheduled to open soon in Moscow.

The Kremlin forced about 200 Soviet nationals working at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow to quit late last year in response to the expulsion of dozens of alleged Soviet spies from their diplomatic missions in the United States.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, Vermont Democrat and former vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, introduced legislation in the past two years along with Sen. William Cohen, Maine Republican and current committee vice chairman, restricting the number of Soviet nationals employed in the U.S. Embassy.

Mr. Leahy has said that KGB agents have been hired by the State Department as Moscow embassy employees. He compared the embassy to an information "sieve" for the Soviets.

A military magistrate last week ordered Sgt. Lonetree confined at the Quantico Marine base until he is granted a hearing where a military judge would decide whether to bring the case before a court-martial or dismiss it, Maj. Rothfork said.

Under Article 32 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the Marine Corps can undertake an administrative procedure that involves appointing an investigative officer for the case and, if evidence warrants, forward the matter to a general court-martial.

"It appears that the military will exercise jurisdiction in the case, but a final decision has not been made," Maj. Rothfork said.